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# Communist Rah-Rah Convention Hoaxes Country on “Principles” [events of May 27-31, 1938]

by James ONeal

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The Communist Party, holding a national convention in New York City [10th: May 27-31, 1938], has attempted its biggest bluff since its members hurled leaflets from buildings in the larger cities, beginning in 1919, calling for “armed insurrection to overthrow the bourgeois state.” Opening by singing “The Star Spangled Banner,” Earl Browder informed the world “why America is interested in the Communist Party.”

With “delegates” representing every state in the Union, and Hawaii, Alaska, Timbuctoo and other points of the compass, the commissars claim a party membership of 75,000, compared with 40,000 in 1936. No figures were given for the various states.

The membership claim on its face is so much hooey, but the claim is not unusual. When the Communists “captured” the Farmer-Labor Party convention in Chicago in 1923 [July 3-5, 1923], they cabled Moscow that they had a “mass party” of 600,000 members. They tried to use the fraud as a basis for bargaining with other movements, especially the Farmer-Laborites of Minnesota, but failed.

Within a year the commissars themselves admitted that their claim was a fraud and they ditched the Federated Farmer-Labor Party with its “600,000 members.”

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While the claquers applauded him, Browder declared in his opening speech, “I have allowed myself to stray into poetic imagery.” How true! No other phrase could better characterize the membership figures and other claims made by him and others.

The speech itself reeked with the piety of an elder at an Epworth League meeting.<sup>1</sup> Gone were the old familiar appeals for “armed insurrection,” of denunciation of the “bourgeois state,” of the “fakerdom of the AF of L bureaucracy,” of the “Socialist betrayers of the working class,” of the “corrupt Trade Union International,” of the “class collaboration betrayers of the workers,” and so on, ad infinitum.

It was only yesterday that a cruel anti-Communist world was infested with “social fascists.” There were millions, tens of millions, hundreds of millions of them only a few years ago. Now the “social fascists” have all disappeared. At least there is no longer any mention of them.

And the commissars want a “People’s Front,” including all those who yesterday were “social fascists.” Republicans, Democrats, Socialists, Social Democrats, American Labor Party, Farmer-Labor parties, trade unions, cooperatives, Catholics, Protestants, Liberals, Progressives, are all urged to join with Browder’s phantom 75,000 to save democracy.

Save it where? In Russia? No. To save it here!

Some people, said Browder, ask the Communist Party, “how can they assure themselves of the loyalty to the Communists of the cause of democracy.” He answered that Communist deeds proved Communist sincerity and proceeded to cite heroic deeds of the boys here and abroad.

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The Trade Union International and the British Labour Party have just answered the “deeds” by refusing any relations with Communism. The “deeds” are well known abroad as well as here. The “deeds” include the Socialist split in this country in 1919 by order of their Moscow masters, the destruction of the Farmer-Labor Party in 1923, the wrecking of unions in the needle trades in 1926, the split in the Workmen’s Circle and organizing a rival to it, the Communist-controlled unions formed by them in the steel, coal, textile, garment, and other industries in this country.

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<sup>1</sup> Organized in 1889, the Epworth League was an organization for young adults in the Methodist Church, originally envisioned as a means of promoting piety within young church members.

The commissars hope to live down this history but it will haunt them until they disappear from the scene. They are “deeds” that can never be forgotten by any intelligent working class that strives to preserve democracy.

Considering the history of the Communist movement, its complete passing from the period of open agitation for armed action against governments to the present dishonest pretense of concern for democracy, one can only conclude that it is not a part of the labor movement. It is a pathological offshoot of the World War and the world depression. It is not sincere.

It does not differ in aim from the Nazis and the Fascists. It would use democracy here as a screen to further its aim of a dictatorship in the United States.

Vested with power, it would establish a totalitarian regime like that in Russia, incorporate the unions and cooperatives as organs of the dictatorship, destroy all other political organizations, put all publications into the hands of agents of the dictatorship, deny public assemblage for all but Communists, exile or imprison dissenters, and shoot all who have the courage to fight the despotism.

In short, Communist totalitarianism differs little from its Nazi and Fascist offshoots and the aim of the Communist Party now is what it was when it was organized by order of its sponsors in Moscow 20 years ago.

*Edited with a footnote by Tim Davenport*

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